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SOURCE Rheinischer Merkur.TRANSFORMATION OF THE EAST GERMAN PEOPLE'S POLICE

Hubertus von Tobien

Since the end of May 1950 the People's Police, which is a cadre for an army, has been in a state of reorganization and enlargement, and the June 1950 strength figures must have been greatly surpassed. At that time the strength of the People's Police units was 140,000 men, trained and ready to be employed. Included in this number were 50,000 men in alert units (Bereitschaften), 50,000 men in police schools, 15,000 men in the transportation police, and 25,000 in the border police. In addition, there were said to be 60,000 members of the Communist Free German Youth, trained and ready to be used in replacement units in case of an emergency.

The Soviets have in East Germany about six armies with a total of 26 divisions, including five armored divisions. They also have at least six troop maneuver areas, five airports, and 14 munitions factories.

Very close and friendly liaison exists between the Red Army staff in Karlshorst and the Main Administration for People's Police Training in Berlin-Adlershof, which is comparable to the former Armed Forces High Command. Soviet militarists are employed as instructors of People's Police units; also, members of the newly created People's Police air force units are being trained in the Soviet Union. In addition, there is a Soviet liaison officer from every branch of the service in Karlshorst, who follows closely the training, combat readiness, and ideological indoctrination of People's Police units.

At the beginning of the reorganization which is now taking place, the East German state had at its disposal the following cadre units for an army: 20 infantry alert units, 4 infantry schools, 9 artillery alert units, 4 artillery schools, 6 armored alert units, one armored forces school, 3 engineer alert units, 3 special units, 2 motorcycle alert units, 2 signal corps alert units, one signal corps school, 2 medical corps schools, 2 ordnance schools, one maintenance school, 2 schools for high-ranking police officers, and one school for political police

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commissars. Each of the alert units and schools is allowed a temporary cadre strength of about 700 men in the beginning; later they will be enlarged to three commands of 300 men each, one special command of 100 - 200 men, and a staff of 100 men, making a total of 1,200 men at full strength. Not included in the foregoing are 20 units comprising about 24,000 men.

There is a Main Administration of the German People's Police, with subordinate regular police units, in addition to the Main Administration for People's Police Training. The latter is considered the High Command for the garrisoned police, which is organized into alert units and schools, and headed by Minister for Security Zaisser. In the Main Administration for Training there are 400 officers, mostly former Wehrmacht officers, who are employed in five main departments -- Political Culture, Staff, Personnel, Quartermaster (Intendantur), and Navy -- and in five independent departments -- Training, Inspection, Information, Secret Service, and Intelligence. By order of Zaisser, the following tactical designations were instituted recently: A - Infantry; B - Artillery; C - Armored; D - Navy. Recently, a Main Administration for Transportation Police, consisting of eight transportation police offices which are charged with guarding railroads and waterways, has been added.

Characteristic of the aforementioned 63 units with a total of 75,000 men is the high percentage of officers, about 1,000 to each unit. This adds to the suspicion that the police formations in East Germany may be a type of "Black Reichswehr" [the basic army from which Hitler formed his Wehrmacht], which in the course of the present reorganization is to be enlarged into a regular people's army. Their state of training and military equipment may be much farther advanced than was that of Hitler's "Black Reichswehr."

All of the aforementioned 63 units are adequately equipped with infantry weapons; 0.8 pistols, 98-k carbines, light and heavy machine guns, mortars, hand grenades, and bazookas. For training in heavy weapons, the Soviets have provided more than 120 armored vehicles: 50 T-34 tanks, 20 assault guns, 15 armored reconnaissance cars, 5 Tiger tanks, 6 British infantry tanks, one Sherman tank, and 23 tracked ammunition carriers. Artillery units have for their training 70 heavy guns: 10 heavy field howitzers, 40 heavy infantry guns, 18 antitank guns, and two "88" antiaircraft guns; they also have 8 light field howitzers and 10 light infantry guns. In addition, the units have at their disposal numerous cars and trucks, tractors, motorcycles, pontoon bridges, horse-drawn vehicles, and handcarts.

In the Kochstedt school for high-ranking police officers, 500 officers are being trained under the leadership of Chief Inspector Freytag to become regimental and battalion commanders.

It is known that three of the units have had training with units of the Red Army. One special unit is quartered with Soviet troops in Zeitz, and this unit performs its duties only with the Soviet troops. Almost all People's Police alert units and schools have participated in Soviet maneuvers.

The pay scale of the People's Police is set up in the same manner as that of the former Wehrmacht. In Ortsklasse "A" [stationed in Area "A"] a recruit receives 300 marks, a Wachtmeister 330 marks, an Oberwachtmeister 370 marks, a Hauptwachtmeister 400 marks, a Meister 450 Marks, a Kommissar (lieutenant) 500 marks, an Oberkommissar (first lieutenant) 570 marks, a Rat (captain) 680 marks, a Kommandeur (lieutenant colonel) 840 marks, and an Inspektor (colonel) 1,150 marks. It was pointed out from the East Zone Police Command in Berlin-Adlershof that 240 million marks are being spent annually for the payment of wages to 55,000 policemen and officers in the alert units.

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